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Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 14291

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, IT
SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC POLITICANS VIEW PARTY AND GOVERN-
MENT PROSPECTS

SUMMARY: RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC SOURCES IN FOUR (OF SIX) PARTY FACTIONS PRODUCED FOLLOWING EVALUATIONS OF CURRENT POSITION OF MORO GOVERNMENT AND SITUATION IN DC PARTY. MORO GOVERNMENT SEEN AS VERY WEAK BECAUSE OF EQUIVOCAL SOCIALIST (PSI) ATTITUDE AND AS UNABLE TO TAKE ANY INITIATIVES NOT ACCEPTABLE TO COMMUNIST PARTY. DC PART FACTIONAL ALIGNMENTS IN STATE OF FLUX.FUTURE NEW MAJORITY SEEN AS EMERGING AROUND FORLANI, BUT LATTER PICTURED AS MOVING WITH GREAT CAUTION. DC SOURCES URGED USG TO SPEAK FRANKLY TO DC LEADERSHIP IN SUPPORT OF ONGOING EFFORTS TO /RENEW" PARTY. ALMIRANTI VISIT VIEWS WITH DISMAY. END SUMMARY.

1. IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS OF EMBOFF WITH DC SOURCES FROM DOROTEO, FORZE NUOVE, BASE AND MOROTEO FACTIONS FOLLOWING COMMON IMPRESSIONS EMERGED ON CURRENT STATE OF DC PARTY AND MORO GOVERNMENT.

2. WEAKNESS OF MORO GOVERNMENT -- PRESENT GOVERNMENT IS UNABLE TO TAKE ANY INITIATIVE WHICH IS NOT ACCEPTABLE TO COMMUNIST PARTY. EFFECTIVE CENTER-LEFT MAJORITY IS
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LACKING DUE TO EQUIVOCAL ATTITUDE OF SOCIALIST PARTY.

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THUS, IN ORDER TO SURVIVIE AND IN ATTEMPT TO AVOID CRISIS
LEADING TO EARLY ELECTIONS, MORO IS CONSTRAINED EITHER
TO DO NOTHING OR TO REACH PRIOR AGREEMENT WITH THE PCI
ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION. BASE FACTION SOURCE CLOSE TO
BOTH MARCORA AND DOROTEO LEADER PICCOLI AND FORCE NUOVE
DEPUTY EXPRESSED FEAR THAT PCI MIGHT BE UNABLE TO EXERT
SUFFICIENT RESTRAINING INFLUCENCE ON UNIONS IN ONGOING
CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS AND THAT "HOT AUTUMN," COUPLED WITH
NEGATIVE ATTITUDE OF PSI COULD BRING DOWN GOVERNMENT
REGARDLESS OF MORO'S MAXIMUM EFFORTS AT COMPROMISE.
WHILE SOURCES NOT RPT NOT PLEASED WITH IMMOBILITY OF
PRESENT GOVERNMENT, ALL FELT THAT ITS SURVIVAL USEFUL
IN TERMS OF "GAINING TIME" FOR DC TO PREPARE FOR SCHEDULED
1977 NATIONAL ELECTIONS.

3. FACTIONAL ALLIGNMENTS IN DC PARTY -- ALL SOURCES AGREED
THAT FACTIONAL ALIGNMENTS WITHIN PARTY ARE IN STATE OF
FLUX. NOWEVER, MOST AGREED THAT NEW MAJORITY IS
COALESCING AROUND FORLANI AND MAY WELL LEAD TO HIS
ASSUMPTION OF THE DC SECRETARYSHIP BEFORE OR AT PARTY
CONGRESS. THIS ALLIGNMENT NOW BASED ON SUPPORT FROM
PICCOLI, BISAGLIA, ANDREOTTI, COLOMBO, DE MITA,
MARCORA AND ELEMENTS IN FORZE NUOVE. MORETEI THEMSELVES
MAY EVENTUALLY BE BROUGHT ON BOARD. SEVERAL SOURCES,
HOWEVER, CRITICIZED FORLANI FOR LACK OF VIGOR AND, IN
ANY CASE, INDICATED THAT HE IS PROCEEDING WITH GREAT
CATION. TWO SOURCES STATED THAT MARCORA, WHO THEY SAY
HAS BEEN A CHIEF FINANCIER OF THE BASE FACTION VIA
MONTEDISON AND OTHER STATE INDUSTRY SOURCES, IS SERIOUSLY
CONTEMPLATING DISSOLUTION OF HIS FACTIONAND CLOSURE OF
ITS ROME HEADQUATERS. A REASON FOR MARCORA'S CONTEMPLATED
ACTION IS THAT THE FLOW OF MONEY FROM THE STATE INDUSTRIES
TO DC FACTIONS HAS DECLINED SINCE THE LAW ON PUBLIC FINANCING
OF POLITICAL PARTIES WAS PASSED IN APRIL 1974.

4. U.S. ATTITUDE? -- ALL SOURCES, WITH
VARYING DEGREES ON ENTHUSIASM, SAW AMBASSADOR'S EPOCA
INTERVIEW AS HELPFUL IN CLARIFYING OUR NEGATIVE ATTITUDE
TOWARD PCI. THREE WHO COMMENTED AT LENGTH ALL EMPHASIZED
NEED FOR U.S. TO SPEAK CLEARLY IN PRIVATE TO DC LEADERS,
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SUPPORTING CURRENT EFFORTS AT PARTY RENEWAL AIMED AT
REGAINING POLITICAL INITIATIVE FOR THE DC PARTY. TWO
SOURCES EMPHASIZED IMPORTANCE OF ECONOMIC SITUATION AND
EXPRESSED HOPE THAT U.S. COULD BE HELPFUL BOTH AT
GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL AND THROUGH U.S. ECONOMIC COMMUNITY.

5. ALMIRANTE VISIT -- THREE SOURCES SEEN AFTER NEWS
OF ALMIRANTE VISIT TO "WHITE HOUSE" BECAME PUBLIC ALL

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REACTED WITH DISMAY, VARIOUSLY TERMING INCIDENT A
"TRAGEDY" AND A "DISASTER." FORZE NUOVE SOURCE COMMENTED
THAT VISIT WOULD MAKE IT DIFFICULT FOR DEMOCRATIC
LEADERS TO GO TO U.S. IN NEAR FUTURE LEST THEY BE SSN
AS "FOLLOWING IN HEELS OF ALMIRANTE." ALL URGED THAT
U.S. G. CLARIFY CIRCUMSTANCES OF VISIT, PARTICULARLY WITH
RESPECT TO RECEPTION OF MSI LEADER BY MEMBER OF EXECUTIVE
BRANCH. VOLPE

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